

Richard Shorman is Chosen as USCF February Volunteer of the Month

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Richard Shorman

Renowned chess coach, writer and photographer Richard Shorman was recognized by the USCF as the volunteer of the month for February 2008.

Richard has done most of his volunteer work locally in the Bay Area, much of it for CalChess. Richard for the last decade has been a regular fixture at local tournaments which he documents using a Nikon camera with a fancy zoom lense which CalChess donated to him a few years ago (Richard is the official CalChess photographer). You can find Richard's chess photo collection in its entirety at www.chessdryad.com.

Richard has taught thousands of kids for the Bay Area, and has been a chess coach for many of the main chess schools in the bay area including Success Chess, Berkeley Chess School, the Mission San Jose Chess Team, and probably many others that I don't know about. Richard has always had a non-political stance in the highly political bay area chess scene, and has always had unselfish motivations in promoting and teaching chess. By working with many organizations, Richard has set a fine example to many on how chess should be taught and coached to grade school kids. Richard was teaching and coaching kids using technology and exciting methods, way before the current scholastic chess craze. He inspired many future coaches and organization leaders including myself.

Although he is rarely recognized as such, Richard is one of the best coaches in the country for grade school kids. His mentors for teaching chess include C.J.S Purdy, Ruben Fine, and Paul Morphy. The bay area definately has its share of micreants in the scholastic chess scene...profiteers, liars, thieves, pretend chess masters etc. etc...one thing is for sure in the wild west chess scene Richard Shorman is definately one of the good guys.

Please read the tribute I did to Richard seven years back in my early days of webmastering here:

<http://www.academicchess.org/learn/richardshoreman.shtml>

Executive USCF board member Randy Hough wrote the following regarding Richard Shorman on the USCF website:

A constant presence in the San Francisco Bay Area chess scene for almost 50 years, Richard Shorman was chess columnist for the *Hayward Daily Review* for over 13 years. As co-instigator of that famous East Bay legend, the Cherryland Café, he provided the chess and a dry wit while Harold James (proprietor and cook) provided the place and a sarcastic wit. Richard's amazing chess classes at Chabot Junior College were well attended, despite the dense curriculum, including *Pawn Endings* by Ilya Maizelis, *Masters of the Chessboard* by Richard Reti, and *Chess the Easy Way* by Reuben Fine. His skills as a translator were especially appreciated in the era before the explosion of chess literature and the Internet.

Richard's varied volunteer history reflects the organizational twists and turns of northern California chess. He was at various times editor of the *Oakland YMCA Chess Bulletin*, Central California Chess Association publicity director and league director, director/instructor of the LERA late night chess group for three decades, Hayward Chess Club instructor/lecturer, Hayward Chess Club president, *Chess in Action* games editor, *Scacchic/Chess Voice* games editor, LERA brilliancy prize judge for 30 years, tournament director—Junior Divisions for Chess Friends of Northern California, and teacher to thousands of East Bay adults and kids for over 40 years.

An enthusiastic photographer, Richard has been the major photo contributor for most of the northern California chess magazines for the last 35 years. He has added more games to the CalGames chess database than anybody else. He's now the senior advisor to ChessDryad.com, a website focused on northern California chess history and games. Audio downloads of some of his lectures are available at www.chessdryad.com/shorman/.

Eric Hicks, director of the successful Academic Chess program in the Bay Area, remarks, "I am proud to admit that I learned much from Richard, and consider myself to be one of his many students. I never learned much chess from him ... but I learned a lot about teaching it. Richard is phenomenal in front of a demonstration board. Richard makes studying and learning chess exciting, and most importantly simplifies it (in the style of Purdy) ... I wish to honor him as one of the best chess coaches, and one of the most positive forces that exists for children's chess. If you are lucky enough to have Richard teaching your kid, hang on to him and protect him as if he were the king himself."

~Randy Hough



In front of legendary chess hang out Cherryland Cafe



In his zone.



User of technology to teach chess..in early days of technology!!



**Nicknamed by his students **